

## **Sullivan County NH**

**Type of meeting:** Board of Commissioners Regular Public Meeting

**Date/Time:** Tuesday, January 16, 2007; 1:30 PM

**Place:** Unity NH, Sullivan County Health Care, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor,  
Activities Room

**Attendees:** Commissioners Ethel Jarvis – *Chair*, Ben C. Nelson – *Vice Chair* (arrived later) and Jeff Barrette – *Clerk*; Ed Gil de Rubio – *County Manager*; Samantha Fletcher – *Human Resource Assistant*; Scott Wojtkiewicz – *Sullivan County Health Care Administrator*; Heidi Smith – *S.C.H.C Director of Nursing*; Sherrie Curtis – *S.C Human Services Coordinator*; Dr. Donald Catino MD – *S.C. Health Care Director of Physicians*; Sharon Johnson-Callum (minute taker).

**Other attendees:** Kelly Murphy – *S.C. United Way Executive Director*; Jeff Graham – *Graham and Graham CPA's*; State-County Delegate Larry Converse; Dick Breed – *Relative of Nursing Home resident/former Nursing Home Assistant Administrator*.

1:30 Commissioner Jarvis, as Chair, brought the meeting to order. Jeff Graham led all in the *Pledge of Allegiance*.

### **AGENDA ITEM NO. 1. MEETING MINUTES**

It was noted the minutes from the last meeting were not finished.

### **AGENDA ITEM NO. 2 SULLIVAN COUNTY UNITED WAY**

Kelly Murphy, Sullivan County United Way Executive Director provided the Board with an update on the recent County employee's fund raising campaign for United Way programs where they raised \$4,500, an amount more than last year. Funds are given to 30 programs and services in the county, with funds also helping two major initiatives: the community mobility project and establishing a dental center that they anticipate in the first year will take care of 1,000 residents. Ms. Murphy wanted to thank the County committee consisting of: Sherrie Curtis, as employee campaign coordinator, Patti Koscielniak, Sam Fletcher and Ron McPhall. Ms. Murphy noted she had certificates for all members and a gift to Sherrie Curtis as campaign coordinator. The event included pledge cards and an agency day held in the Frank Smith Living Room. Mr. Gil de Rubio thanked the staff for their contributions. Commissioner Jarvis noted the dental program was much needed and thanked Ms. Murphy for working on it.

### **NON AGENDA ITEM - WELLNESS FAIR UPDATE**

Sam Fletcher, Human Resource Assistant, briefed the Board on the "*County Wellness Fair*" planned for tomorrow 7 a.m. – 3 p.m. at the Sullivan County Unity Complex, Ahern Building; Unity hosts 92% of the County workforce, which is why the event was held there. All employees were invited to attend. They are trying to elaborate on what is in the community and vendors such as Twisted Fitness of Claremont, Curves of both Newport and Claremont, the Big Brothers and Big Sisters programs, Connecticut Valley Home Care and a couple massage therapists, will be there. They will hold a \$250 raffle

prize for each shift. Health Trust will provide \$300 reimbursement for joining a health club and employees are eligible to receive \$75 to complete health surveys on line.

### AGENDA ITEM NO. 3 HUMAN SERVICES REPORT

Mr. Gil de Rubio noted he requested this portion to be added to provide Commissioner Barrette with an orientation/update.

*1:36 Commissioner Nelson arrived*

#### AGENDA ITEM NO. 3.A. CLAWBACK

Mr. Gil de Rubio noted "Clawback" pertains to dual eligible Medicare/Medicaid clients and the way the federal Medicare program will finance the new prescription drug program. It began with the federal government giving the states a break on prescription drugs, but feds said before they could do that they would charge for the previous two years. NH State then said counties were their partners, so would expense the counties. For a year and ½ negotiations have gone on regarding the back monies – the "Clawback". Ms. Curtis indicated the County is seeing a shift and is paying \$20,000 a month towards Clawback. They were billed and have paid approximately \$140,000. Ms. Curtis noted, *"it's like an insurance premium, we pay \$47,000 a month, which is what was budgeted. This is not only for nursing home, but those in the community receiving the HCBC services, which is why it's going through the Human Services Department. Our provider payments fluctuate, but we have seen a sizable drop."* \$40,000 – 60,000 seen last year. \$35,000 is the highest seen this year. Last month's bill was \$12,000. Clawback should decrease each year, however next year's payment will be \$70,000, an increase from this year. Mr. Gil de Rubio noted none of the counties were invited to the negotiation table. Commissioner Nelson and Ms. Curtis discussed premium cost, which he felt was higher than Medicare Part D. Commissioner Nelson noted the co-pay is higher than the private sector.

#### AGENDA ITEM NO. 3. DCYF BILING UPDATE

It was noted, in the past, each county received an itemized bill from NH State DHHS for services provided for delinquent children. Ms. Curtis is responsible for reconciling the bills, making sure the billed services were meant for the county. Effective April 2007 the State has notified the counties they will no longer receive itemized bills, which will deter reconciliation by Human Services Coordinators at the County level. Maggie Bishop, Grafton County H.S. Administrator, has spoken to the State regarding the NHAC Human Services Affiliate's concerns on this matter. Mr. Gil de Rubio has offered to speak with DHHS Commissioner John Stephen and the NHAC. Ms. Curtis noted parental reimbursement has increased and if the County H.S. does not have the ability to view an itemization, in order to follow up with the family who receives the service(s), this will hinder the County HHS collections; unlike the current format, they will be unable to see if the insurance is being billed; plus, she will have trouble providing any type of future budgeting. Mr. Gil de Rubio and Ms. Curtis will report back to the Board on any future updates. Commissioner Barrette asked if the State had provided any rationale for the change. Ms. Curtis noted five counties work well with the State and if they have questions regarding bills they can contact the State for clarification; whereas, the other

five counties will not budge on bills received and submit payments to the State based on what their county believes is correct. The Board briefly discussed if having housing for these youths within the county would be cheaper. Ms. Curtis encouraged them to improve on preventative dollars to match or run programs out of the county, rather than creating housing for children, as the county would benefit more by funding prevention programs.

#### **AGENDA ITEM NO. 4. HEALTH CARE REPORT**

##### **AGENDA ITEM NO. 4.C. INTRODUCTIONS TO SULLIVAN COUNTY HEALTH CARE'S DIRECTOR OF PHYSICIANS, DR. CATINO**

Dr. Donald Catino noted this was his third week and likes the improvements he's seen in the facility, staff and with the new Administrator, Scott Wojtkiewicz. Dr. Catino briefed the Board on his scholastic and medical background; of his 33-year New London practice he just closed; and his work with Genesis. He is a Certified Internist and passed boards in geriatrics; while at New London he received the Medical Director certificate and became New London's Medical Director; is currently working with the Lebanon and Keene Genesis facilities; and continues in New London. He's studying acupuncture to attain a national certificate and may possibly apply this in the nursing home environment. He noted he brings experience and will be at the Sullivan County Health Care facility throughout the days Wednesday and Thursdays seeing patients; and, is available via his pager all other days. He noted items he would be helping out with at Sullivan County Health Care:

- Standardized wound/infection protocol, so that all nurses look at and treat wounds and infections in the same manner. He'll provide the nurses with a short list of things to check before they call the physician.
- Screening residents coming in to the facility and future protocol.

He's spoken to staff and has talked to other doctors to let them know he's available if they need him to assume care of their patient. Dr. Catino discussed how hard it is for physicians to come out to Unity, but will insist that physician visits be made on a regular 30, 60, or 90 day cycle, per resident need, in order to stay within regulations.

Commissioner Nelson thanked Dr. Catino for joining their meeting noting he'd not seen the previous physician. Dr. Catino noted he's excited about being the Medical Director and will help with the Department of Corrections, also. On behalf of Sullivan County, Mr. Gil de Rubio thanked Dr. Catino for taking on the position.

*Dr. Catino left the meeting.*

Mr. Wojtkiewicz noted since Dr. Catino came on board he's seen a tremendous, positive, change in the environment. He noted Ms. Smith and April are very appreciative having him on board and noted Dr. Catino has attended CQI meetings as well as talked to nursing staff.

##### **AGENDA ITEM NO. 4.A. CENSUS**

Mr. Wojtkiewicz noted the current census is at 153: 117 Medicaid, 18 Private, 18 Medicare, with three vacant beds. He discussed the December 2006 Daily Census Reconciliation; Sullivan County Nursing Home Dec 2006 Billing: total billed is \$816,646.10, total amount budgeted is \$852,524; he noted their Genesis billing consultant came in last week and corrected problems on bills and re-billed \$78,000; he noted Julie Woodman is back-billing for about \$30,000. Commissioner Nelson requested year-to-date columns be added to all spreadsheets. In response to Commissioner Barrette's inquiries, Mr. Wojtkiewicz confirmed it's inevitable that some small portion of the billed amount would be denied and noted they've tightened their billings in the past 3-4 months. Mr. Wojtkiewicz provided scenarios as to why a claim might be denied.

#### AGENDA ITEM NO. 4.B. STAFFING

Mr. Wojtkiewicz noted with the recent Noro-virus outbreak in other facilities Sullivan County Health Care has witnessed 50% of the staff calling in sick. They are using agency to cover the call outs. As they feel sick time abuse may be involved, Ms. Smith and Mr. Wojtkiewicz are speaking with those individuals involved. They are keeping a trend report and have provided a copy to the Union representatives asking for help. He noted the facility is adequately staffed as other staff are picking up the hours to work doubles, plus they are using agency. Unfortunately, this situation makes life difficult for staff that wish to be at work. Mr. Gil de Rubio confirmed they are working on this issue diligently, but still have problems with work ethics. Mr. Wojtkiewicz noted they are holding the staff to clinical standards of attendance and if not up to par are giving them counseling and warnings. Commissioner Nelson requested numbers of call outs. Mr. Gil de Rubio will e-mail data for the last few months to all Commissioners by tomorrow. Mr. Wojtkiewicz briefed the Board on the positions they were hiring. Mr. Gil de Rubio spoke of the 25% perfect attendance at the D.O.C. He noted, historically, the nursing home has not penalized employees for not coming in to work. Commissioner Barrette asked if the facility used "floaters". In response, Mr. Wojtkiewicz noted a Union representative once asked why they just don't overstaff in anticipation of call outs. He noted that was not realistic, as they would need to send people home when overstaffed. He briefed the Board on how they move staff around to adequately staff areas safely. He noted, though staff may not be familiar with a resident on another floor, the resident's documentation is all there. He discussed the list of Per Diem staff they call; however, they frequently find the person is not available when needed and they do not have a large pool to draw from. Mr. Gil de Rubio spoke briefly about the 10 sick days collective bargaining staff are eligible for and the point of view that those days are theirs to use even if not sick. Mr. Wojtkiewicz spoke about disincentive of three days going back in to ET. Mr. Gil de Rubio noted the best scenario is a full time staff person and to change the culture.

#### AGENDA ITEM NO. 5 COUNTY MANAGER'S REPORT

##### AGENDA ITEM NO. 5C. FY07 MONTHLY FINANCIALS

Mr. Gil de Rubio introduced Jeff Graham of Graham & Graham CPA's to discuss the various technical issues related to the County interim financial statements. Mr. Graham started by noting that the FY06 audit showed only the General Fund encumbrances at

\$52,532. The actual encumbered funds equal over \$ 659,000. The other \$ 607,000 was a commitment in Fund 42 (Capital). This amount must be treated and reported differently in County financial statements at year-end and in each interim financial report. Mr. Graham listed the different GAAP rules that govern why this is the proper treatment. One of the challenges for the County finance office is a difference between GAAP and the software procedures required to account for the disbursement during this current fiscal year. Mr. Graham explained the procedures are now in place, as of this week, as agreed by Melanson Heath, Unifund, Graham & Graham and the county staff. Fund 50 was created with everyone's input and is now being reconciled as of December 2006 each quarter. This will assist in accurate financial reporting and with year-end audit work. The concern by Mr. Gil de Rubio and Mr. Graham is that no duplication of expenses or use of budgeted allowances would be counted twice, in error. During the first several months of this fiscal year, both while the audit was actually in progress and subsequent to the reporting of the FY 06 results, the interim financial statements were held back at the request of Mr. Graham to allow for a proper reconciliation of these items. This is now complete and the interim financial statements are being released on or around Friday. One additional procedure will be recommended for the FY07 audit, which will more fully disclose the commitments made at this fiscal year end in Fund 42. This disclosure will assist the County in releasing interim financial statements more timely for the first few months after the close of the year-end FY07. Mr. Gil de Rubio noted he would be discussing the subject of encumbrances with all managers as the fiscal year end nears its close in the month of June 2007. Mr. Gil de Rubio is not in favor of using this encumbrance method; however Mr. Graham noted that there is no reason to omit this process, just to monitor and reconcile it more closely during the end of one fiscal year and the start of the next fiscal year. Mr. Gil de Rubio noted that he believed an overlap in Fund 24 may occur and that he will be monitoring this Fund and that a memo would be released to those managers affected.

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 5.A. ASSISTED CARE/SENIOR LIVING UPDATE**

Mr. Gil de Rubio noted the 501.c.3 papers were filed and they have the architectural renditions and layouts for the assisted care/senior living facility.

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 5.B. S.C. CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM/DOC NEEDS ASSESSMENT UPDATE**

Mr. Gil de Rubio noted they are getting into the engineering cards, have held two public forums and should have the preliminary draft to the Board and the S.C. Criminal Justice Coordinating Committee members soon.

**NON-AGENDA ITEM FEDERAL INMATE HOUSING**

Mr. Gil de Rubio briefed the Board on a recent meeting with the federal government regarding possible federal inmate housing at the Sullivan County D.O.C. He noted the issue is out there, but whether the feds consider Sullivan County is a bit ambiguous as the feds are looking at VT to extend a current contract and will look to Sullivan County if it falls through.

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 6. COMMISSIONERS REPORT**

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 6. ANTIOCH STUDY/DUEL STREAM MRF**

Mr. Gil de Rubio noted on January 29<sup>th</sup> he met with Paul Markowitz of ANTIOCH regarding duel MRF, along with Dan O'Neill-Newport Town Manager, Guy Santagate-Claremont City Manager and Commissioner Jarvis. At the meeting they reviewed a draft MRF report and power point from ANTIOCH. He noted that the region was under utilizing recycling and that the current monies applied to current waste practices would support this type of approach. He noted all municipalities would like the County to step forward and manage a MRF, but he feels the numbers presented are soft and a regional meeting should be held to invite all municipalities. He noted Mr. Markowitz called Friday to indicate if the County went for a non-profit planning grant to create a business plan and if the larger areas threw in \$5,000 each, ANTIOCH would apply \$20,000, in order to cover the plan. Mr. Gil de Rubio will keep the Board updated as they proceed.

**NON AGENDA ITEM FUTURE BOARD MEETINGS**

The Board decided to change future Sullivan County Board of Commissioners meetings from 1:30 p.m. to 3 p.m.

**NON AGENDA ITEM FACILITY SIDE WALK SANDING**

Commissioner Nelson pointed out the sidewalks in the front of the nursing home building could use more sand. Mr. Gil de Rubio will catch up with Mr. Chanis on this issue.

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 7. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

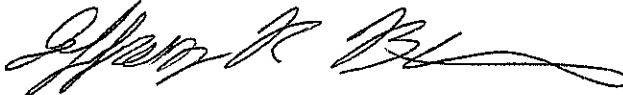
Dick Breed indicated the "Business Manager" should check on the sick time, as it was not 10, but 12 days. Mr. Gil de Rubio noted he was referring to the 10 days as far as disciplinary action was concerned. Mr. Breed noted he also disagrees on the comments about past discipline, as he feels "they were disciplined". Mr. Gil de Rubio noted there were many examples of numerous reprimands given and never followed through on. Mr. Breed noted he disagreed with Mr. Wojtkiewicz's comment that the facility is adequately staffed, as he feels, especially in the MacConnell Unit, staffing is "atrocious". He indicated, *"From the comments I heard earlier, I was questioning in my mind whether discipline was taking place. Staffing is a problem, current staff getting run down and I fear they are going to quit"*. Mr. Breed invited the Board to talk to staff and ask questions. Mr. Breed also noted he has a relative at Sullivan County Health Care and has not seen anything to complain about.

State Delegate Larry Converse indicated he knows several women that lost out on their step raise due to receiving a demerit only. Mr. Gil de Rubio noted step raises were part of the evaluation and go before the Union and the employee's supervisor. He confirmed they would not lose their step raise just for a demerit only.

State Delegate Converse provided Mr. Gil de Rubio and the Board a copy of an LSR he was working on and noted, *"...this is why I kept this confidential"*.

3:20 A motion was made, by Commissioner Barrette, to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Nelson seconded the motion. There was no discussion. A voice vote was taken. The motion carried, unanimously.

*Respectfully submitted,*

 2/7/07  
Jeff Barrette, Clerk  
Board of Commissioners

JB/s.j-c.